

# BERYLLIUM

## WORKER SAFETY

### Beryllium Worker Safety - Module 1

#### Why We're Here

#### Transcript

**Dr. Herbert Anderson** We saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of American young men. That was quite an incentive.

**Former Secretary of Energy - Bill Richardson** They know they did something for the national security of the country,

**Dr. Herbert Anderson** We thought of ourselves as heroes.

**Secretary Bill Richardson** I think they feel that their government let them down.

**Glenn Bell** Beryllium...it's used in the nuclear industry.

**Secretary Bill Richardson** In those days the objective was make as many bombs as fast as possible.

**Glenn Bell** It's extremely lightweight...and to some of us, unfortunately, extremely deadly.

**Secretary Bill Richardson** At the very least, somebody should apologize to them.

**Dr. Lee Newman** By breathing it in, the immune system comes in with an army of cells to react against it. You unfortunately end up trashing the battlefield, and that battlefield is your lung.

**Glenn Bell** Production was put above health and safety.

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**Secretary  
Bill Richardson**

Priority one was production of our nuclear weapons.

**Former Assistant  
Secretary of Energy -  
Dr. David Michaels**

We were using a standard that was implemented first in 1948, and it hadn't changed and certainly was out of date.

**Glenn Bell**

My interest right now is in the next generation of workers.

**Dr. David Michaels**

The Department of Energy is very proud of the new beryllium standard. We reduced the level, which triggers protection by a factor of ten.

**Narrator**

That's 1/10th the concentration allowed for by the OSHA Standard. This lower action level will provide greater protection for DOE beryllium workers.

**Dr. David Michaels**

It's absolutely necessary to spend whatever it takes in these cases to make sure workers are safe.